

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 DHA-02 H-02 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00

IO-11 JUSE-00 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /039 R

DRAFTED BY D/HA/ORM:JCHAVCHAVADZE:MTM

APPROVED BY D/HA:JMWilSON

EA:RHMILLER

EA/ANP:MMICHAUD

EA/LC/VN:JROSENTHAL

EA/TB:GROBERTS

H:EKRIZEK (INFO)

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R 150023Z JAN 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: RESETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN  
AUSTRALIA

1. IN VIEW OF THE RECENT CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT WE BELIEVE  
IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO REOPEN THE QUESTION OF RESETTLING  
INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA.

2. AS EMBASSY HAS INDICATED, THE FORMER PM'S NEGATIVE  
POSITION DOES NOT REFLECT THE ATTITUDE OF MANY MEMBERS OF  
THE PRESENT GOVERNING PARTY, CERTAIN CHURCH GROUPS AND  
MANY SEGMENTS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

3. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE FORMER PM SAID TO PRESIDENT FORD  
ON MAY 7, 1975 THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD ACCEPT "ABOUT HALF OF  
THE NUMBER TAKEN BY CANADA." AS OF THIS DATE, WE ESTIMATE  
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THAT CANADA HAS TAKEN APPROXIMATELY 4,000. OUR INFORMATION

IS THAT AUSTRALIA HAS ACCEPTED NO MORE THAN 1,200 REFUGEES.

4. WHILE THE DIRECT RESETTLEMENT OF OVER 130,000 REFUGEES THROUGH THE U.S. SYSTEM HAS JUST BEEN COMPLETED, OUR CONCERN NOW IS FOR THE REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS NOW LIVING IN DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS IN CAMPS IN THAILAND. MOST WILL BE RESETTLED BY THE UNHCR IN THAILAND, BUT THERE ARE MANY WHO WOULD BE SUBJECT TO PERSECUTION UPON RETURN TO THEIR HOMELANDS.

5. OF SPECIAL INTEREST ARE THOSE WHO ARE IN THE HIGH RISK CATEGORY -- CONSISTING OF REFUGEES WHOSE ASSOCIATION OR WORK WITH THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES IN INDOCHINA OR ASSOCIATION WITH FORMER GOVERNMENTS OF VIETNAM, LAOS OR CAMBODIA MAKES THEM PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO PERSECUTION IF THEY HAD TO RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRIES OF NATIONALITY. MANY SPEAK ENGLISH AND HAVE SKILLS AND TRAINING THAT WOULD MAKE THEM PARTICULARLY VALUABLE TO AUSTRALIA.

6. REQUEST EMBASSY CANBERRA APPROACH THE GOA ON THIS MATTER AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL. DRAWING ON PREVIOUS PARAGRAPHS AND POINTING OUT AUSTRALIA'S COOPERATION IN THE PAST IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, REQUEST GOA TO CONSIDER ADMITTING ADDITIONAL REFUGEES. POINT OUT OUTSTANDING UNHCR APPEAL FOR FUNDS AND RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES. REASSURE GOA THAT THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BANGKOK AND CONSULAR OFFICES IN THAILAND ARE PREPARED TO ASSIST THEIR EFFORTS IN WHATEVER WAY IS POSSIBLE, SUCH AS HELPING TO IDENTIFY SKILLS AMONG THE REFUGEES TO FACILITATE RESETTLEMENT.

7. EMBASSY BANGKOK MAY ALSO WISH TO DISCUSS THIS GENERAL PROBLEM WITH THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN THAILAND ALSO MAKING THE POINT OF OUR WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST IN WHATEVER WAY POSSIBLE.

8. FYI. WE ARE AT PRESENT SEEKING AUTHORITY FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO ADMIT ADDITIONAL REFUGEES FROM INDOCHINA. WE WILL HAVE TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS AND WE ANTICIPATE THAT CONGRESS WILL ONCE AGAIN BEAR DOWN ON THE ROLE OF OTHER NATIONS IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE

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REFUGEES. APART FROM THE HUMAN NEEDS OF THESE REFUGEES WHICH REQUIRE REDRESSING, IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR EFFORTS IF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT COULD PARTICIPATE IN A RESETTLEMENT EFFORT FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. WE HOPE TO ENCOURAGE OTHER COUNTRIES TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE AND AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL IN THIS REGARD. THE UNHCR IS EXPECTED TO LAUNCH A NEW APPEAL SOON FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

AND RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. GOA COULD RESPOND TO THAT APPEAL WITH BOTH MONEY AND RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES. KISSINGER

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